

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA****COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA***[Hearing Held in Greenville, SC]***HEARING #10794****AUGUST 7, 2006****6:30 P.M.**

**DOCKET NO. 2006-107-WS: UNITED UTILITY COMPANIES, INC.** — Application for Adjustment of Rates and Charges and Modification of Certain Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Water and Sewer Service.

**HEARING BEFORE:** G. O’Neal HAMILTON CHAIRMAN, C. Robert MOSELEY, VICE CHAIRMAN; and COMMISSIONERS John E. “Butch” HOWARD, David A. WRIGHT, Randy MITCHELL, Elizabeth B. “Lib” FLEMING, and Mignon L. CLYBURN.

ADVISOR TO COMMISSION: Josh Minges, Esq.

**STAFF:** Charles L.A. Terreni, Chief Clerk/Administrator; and Jocelyn G. Boyd, Esq., Deputy Clerk; James B. Spearman, PhD., Executive Assistant to Commissioners; MaryJane Cooper, Court Reporter.

**APPEARANCES:** John M.S. Hoefer, Esq., and Benjamin Mustian, Esq., representing UNITED UTILITY COMPANIES, INC., **APPLICANT.**

Shannon Bowyer Hudson, Esq., representing **THE OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF.**

**TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS  
VOLUME 4**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

# INDEX

	<u>PAGE</u>
<b><u>Welcome:</u></b> Chairman Hamilton .....	4
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Senator Ralph Anderson</u></b> .....	9
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Robin Johnson</u></b> .....	10
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	12
Examination by Commissioner Mitchell .....	13
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	13
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Elsie Cooper</u></b> .....	14
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	16
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF James Waddell</u></b> .....	18
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Sara Ford</u></b> .....	18
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Robert Green</u></b> .....	21
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	22
Examination by Chairman Hamilton .....	23
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Rick Leonardi</u></b> .....	24
Examination by Commissioner Mitchell .....	27
Examination by Commissioner Howard .....	27
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	28
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefer .....	29
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Cynthia Rice</u></b> .....	30
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Rica Rose Conover</u></b> .....	32
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Jerry Tant</u></b> .....	34
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Tigner Culpepper</u></b> .....	35
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Dale Conover</u></b> .....	37
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Elaine Downs</u></b> .....	38
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Virginia Grey</u></b> .....	39
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	42
Examination by Commissioner Fleming .....	43
Cross Examination by Mr. Hoefer .....	44
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Betty Ferguson</u></b> .....	45
Examination by Commissioner Clyburn .....	45

<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Linda Stazer</u></b> .....	46
Examination by Commissioner Wright .....	49
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Robert Keebler</u></b> .....	50
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Tom Warren</u></b> .....	52
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Maimie Owens</u></b> .....	54
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Rodney Price</u></b> .....	55
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Kathy [inaudible]</u></b> .....	56
<b><u>TESTIMONY OF Ruth Wyatt</u></b> .....	59

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: We'd like to welcome each of you to the South Carolina Public Service Commission's public hearing. We're here tonight in Greenville in your very nice library. We really enjoy the reception that we've had. We had an early lunch in downtown Greenville, and that was very enjoyable. Y'all have done an excellent job in this community and [inaudible], and we congratulate you on that.

We're here tonight to hear what you have to say about your water service, and we need to thank your county delegation, especially Senator Anderson and Senator Allen, for asking us to come to Greenville to meet with you so you would not have to make the sacrifice to come to Columbia when we have the main hearing, the merits hearing. So, we're here tonight to hear you out.

I'd like to at this time, to introduce the Commissioners that are with us. We have on my far left, Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Wright, Vice Chairman Moseley. On my far right is Commissioner Fleming, Commissioner Clyburn, Commissioner Mitchell, and our Staff Attorney, attorney Minges. At this time, I would like to ask him if he would to present to you the rules and procedures of the hearing.

JOSH MINGES: Good evening, folks. As the

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Chairman said, my name is Josh Minges. I'm counsel to the  
2 Commission in tonight's hearing in Docket No. 2006-107-WS,  
3 regarding United Utility's Application for a rate increase. I'd like  
4 to take this opportunity to introduce the Commission Staff. If  
5 you folks, could just raise your hands. The Office of Regulatory  
6 Staff, if you folks could raise your hands.

7 The Office of Regulatory Staff represents the  
8 public, so please direct your questions to them and not  
9 to the Commissioners, after the meeting, and to John  
10 Hoefer, who represents United Utility.

11 In a moment, I will be calling names of those who  
12 signed up to give testimony. Once your name is called,  
13 come up to the podium, you'll be sworn in, state your name  
14 and address and then proceed with your testimony. After  
15 you're finished, remain at the podium through questions that  
16 either the Commissioners or that Mr. Hoefer might have. As  
17 a final matter, if you speak as a public witness tonight, you  
18 will not be permitted to speak at the merits hearing in  
19 Columbia on August 28, in the Commission's hearing room,  
20 at 101 Executive Center Drive, in Columbia. Directions can  
21 be found on our website, which is [www.psc.sc.gov](http://www.psc.sc.gov).

22 At this time, I will turn the proceeding back over.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you.

24 I'm O'Neal Hamilton, Chairman of the Commission,  
25 and I would like to ask, if you would do one thing so we

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 won't have any interruptions as we go through the  
2 proceeding, if you have cell phones, if you would please  
3 turn them off. That would be very much appreciated by all  
4 the parties concerned.

5 First thing I'd like to ask the parties if they have  
6 any preliminary –

7 Mr. Hoefer.

8 JOHN M.S. HOEFER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The  
9 Applicant would like to state its objection to testimony  
10 consisting of unsubstantiated complaints regarding  
11 customer service, quality of service or customer relations  
12 issues. The basis for this objection is that the receipt and  
13 reliance upon such testimony would deny the Applicant due  
14 process of law, permit determination of such matters, permit  
15 the complaint procedures established under law and  
16 Commission regulations, the determination of such matters  
17 to be circumvented and is an inappropriate basis for the  
18 determining just and reasonable rates.

19 In support of this objection, the Applicant cites  
20 *Patton vs. PSC*, 312 S.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> 257, Order of the Court of  
21 Commons Pleas, *Tega Cay Water Service vs. PSC*,  
22 that's Civil Action No. 97-CP-40-0923, Order dated  
23 September 25, 1998, and the Commission's own Order  
24 No. 1999-191, in Docket No. 96-137-WS, dated March  
25 16, 1999.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

The Applicant requests that this objection be deemed a continuing objection such that there would not be a need for repeated objections each time a customer testifies to matters of this nature. We cite in support of that request *State v. Douglas*, 626 S.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> 59, and that the objection apply to documents and testimony elicited under examination. The Applicant also requests that the Chairman defer ruling on the continuing objection until a final order is issued in this case.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir. Ms. Hudson?

SHANNON BOWYER HUDSON: Mr. Chairman, if it pleases the Commission, we would like to respond to the Company's remarks. First of all, my name is Shannon Hudson. I'm an attorney with the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff. Thank you all for coming out.

In addressing the Company's remarks, we do not oppose the continuing objection process presented by the Company. But, we do not believe a complaint has to be corroborated or substantiated in any other way aside from the customer's testimony. Therefore, we believe the testimony the Company objects to is admissible for purposes of this night hearing. We also do not believe that the legal authorities cited by the Company fully

1 support the grounds for the Company's objections.

2 Keeping this in mind, we ask the Commission to take  
3 notice of our position. We would also like to reserve our  
4 right to respond in writing to the Company's basis for its  
5 continuing objection.

6 In addition, we ask of the Company that within a  
7 reasonable time after this night hearing and after it has  
8 had time to review the transcript, it submit a letter to the  
9 Commission to be posted on the Commission's website  
10 setting forth the specific portions of the testimony the  
11 Company objects to under its continuing objection, the  
12 reason for the Company's objection, and the identity of  
13 the speaker. The letter would allow those who took time  
14 from their evening tonight to see on the Commission's  
15 website whether any portion of their testimony is  
16 objected to by the Company. We believe this is fair and  
17 reasonable to everyone involved, and we are hopeful  
18 that the Company would agree to this.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, the Company  
21 would agree.

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you.

23 Ms. Hudson, we will take notice of your objection,  
24 and Mr. Hoefer, your objection has been received by the  
25 Commission and will be ruled on in the final order.



1 MR. HOEFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, sir.

3 MS. HUDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, ma'am.

5 At this time, we will start our process, and the first  
6 witness we will call is Senator Anderson. Senator  
7 Anderson, please step forward.

8 **WHEREUPON, Ralph Anderson**, first being duly  
9 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

10 MS. BOYD: If you would, please state your name and  
11 address for the record.

12 **TESTIMONY OF SENATOR ANDERSON:**

13 Senator Ralph Anderson, at 315 Elder Street, Greenville. The subdivisions  
14 that we're talking about is in my district. First, I would like to thank each one of  
15 you for taking the time out to come to Greenville, and I hope that you have a  
16 safe trip back.

17 I am concerned about the increases. When we look around at the gas  
18 increases, and it just went up today, grocery prices increased, natural gas  
19 increased, kerosene increased, minimum wage did not increase, and this is  
20 creating a major problem on people because it's not affordable anymore. I  
21 understand that they probably can use an increase, but I think that at this  
22 point that they've got to bite the bullet because it has changed the quality of  
23 life for people in my district. It's just not affordable. So, I just hope that the  
24 Commission decides that they will understand that they're people that's  
25 wealthy, and there's people that's not so wealthy and they need some help.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 I listened today at Senator Graham's remarks on the world, and we are  
2 in a crisis, if you're not aware of it. We've got to do something as a Commissioner, as  
3 state elected officials, to hold things in line, otherwise a year from now people are  
4 going to rise up. They've handled all they can.

5 Thanks again for coming up.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, Senator.

7 Representative Allen, would you have some  
8 remarks, sir?

9 REPRESENTATIVE KARL ALLEN: Mr.  
10 Chairman, I would just echo what the Senator said. So, I  
11 reserve not being sworn in. If I need to speak later in  
12 August, I will.

13 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir,  
14 appreciate that.

15 All right, we'll ask now -

16 MR. MINGES: Robin Johnson, please come  
17 forward.

18 **WHEREUPON, Robin Johnson**, first being duly  
19 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

20 MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and  
21 address for the record?

22 **TESTIMONY OF MS. JOHNSON:**

23 Yes, my name is Robin Johnson, and the address is 7 Pinerock Drive. That is  
24 in the Cherokee Valley subdivision in North Greenville County.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Would you like to give

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

testimony?

[Ms. Johnson] Yes. In regard to the rate increase there are just three points that I would like to address as a resident and a consumer. One is the equity issue. There is residences, there may be a family of two and in another residence there may be a family of twelve, and each family may be paying the same rate for our usage. In my estimation this is not a fair issue. It is a question of equity. It should be based on use and not a fixed rate.

Another point I would like to make has to do with uniformity in rates. It seems there are different companies that do provide this service and that one company should not be responding in a different way, treating its customers at a rate that is different from perhaps the rest of the community, the rest of the region, or the rest of the state.

Another point that I would like to make has to do with the fact that we're not talking about a disaster area here. We're not talking an area which requires particularly high rates because there's damages to business or anything like that. This is a community that has been blessed in that way and simply, these higher rates are - in none those areas a necessity.

The fourth point that I would like to make has to do with the last rate increase that was just made in, as I understand it, in 2001, and that was a rate increase of approximately 50%.

That concludes my testimony.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: All right, if you would wait just a few minutes in case we have some questions.

Do we have any questions, Commissioners?

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Q Good evening, Ms. Johnson. I want to ask you a couple of questions. How  
2 long have you lived at this particular address in Cherokee Valley?

3 A Four years.

4 Q Four years. In terms of – you made mention, you made mention of four  
5 points, basically having to do with pricing. One, I wanted to ask you about that  
6 I didn't get a good handle on is the number two, which was uniformity.

7 A The uniformity, as I understand it, that this has to do with the various parties  
8 that provide these services and that there is – it seems that my area is treated  
9 differently from others that live there. It's a difference in rates.

10 Q Okay, so you're talking – you're looking at, you're comparing United Utility  
11 with other systems in the area?

12 A That is correct.

13 Q Not United Utility charging someone else within the system something  
14 different, but you're looking at comparisons with other providers in the area?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Tell me a bit, and I don't want to belabor; I know we have to get out of here by  
17 8:30. But, in terms of your quality of service, do you have any issues as it  
18 relates to that?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you have any problems?

21 A No.

22 Q Okay. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other Commissioners?

24 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: I've just got a  
25 couple.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Mitchell.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER MITCHELL:**

Q Yes, ma'am, good to see you. You spoke about there was – the same with two in one household as twelve in a household. Could you tell me a little bit about that or could you tell me, it's a flat rate and that it doesn't matter how much consumption is used by that household?

A A flat rate. That's the way I understand it. It is a flat rate per residence.

Q Right. I wanted to make that clear for the record. So, that's really your problem there that it doesn't matter about consumption. One person's paying the same amount as a family of ten.

A Yes. Right.

Q Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Wright.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

Q Yes, ma'am. Where exactly is Cherokee Valley?

A It's in North Greenville County. It is – well, are you a golfer?

Q I am.

A Do you know where the Cherokee Valley Golf Course is?

Q I do not, but I'm going to find it.

A Well, do you know where North Greenville University is?

Q Yes, I do.

A It's right behind – I call it behind at least. I guess you would say north of North Greenville University.

Q Are you collection only or you sewer – is it treatment only or do you know?

A I'm not sure what you're asking.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Q But, you're a flat rate, right? That correct?

2 A Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

4 [No Response]

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer?

6 MR. HOEFER: No questions, Mr. Chairman.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
8 much.

9 MR. MINGES: Elsie Cooper.

10 **WHEREUPON, Elsie Cooper**, first being duly  
11 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

12 MS. BOYD: Please state your name and address for  
13 the record.

14 **TESTIMONY OF MS. COOPER:**

15 My name is Elsie Cooper. I live at 808 Chelsey Drive, in Simpsonville, South  
16 Carolina, known as The Shoals and The Village, which is located between  
17 West Georgia Road and Fort [inaudible] Road. Let me tell you right now, it is  
18 a depressed area, okay.

19 First of all, I'd like to thank you, each and everyone of you for coming  
20 here tonight, bringing your meeting here because most of couldn't make it to  
21 Columbia, and we do appreciate that. And, I appreciate you listening to me  
22 because I'm not a professional speaker and my etiquette won't be right, but  
23 I'm here to represent my friends and neighbors in The Shoals and in The  
24 Village.

25 We'd just like to know why we have to pay more to United Utility to

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 take our sewer away than we pay to Greenville Water System to deliver water  
2 and take our sewer. We pay more to United Utility. I can't speak for the rest of  
3 the people. Some people have larger families and use a lot more than I do,  
4 and I don't use a lot because I'm not there very much. But, based on my last  
5 three months bills from the Greenville Water Company, it was \$62.23, for  
6 water and sewer. I can show you my bills. My last three months bills from  
7 United Utility was \$73.98 for sewer only.

8 I moved to The Shoals area about six years ago, and at that time United  
9 Utility charged a small fee every other month. A year or so later, they went up on  
10 the prices, started charging it once a month. Now, they've raised the price two or  
11 three times in the last couple to three years. Speaking for most of the people who  
12 live in this area – are elderly, they're on fixed incomes, or poor, and you'd be  
13 surprised \$8 more for something like this might not bother any of you guys, but it  
14 certainly affects, I would say 90% of the people that live in this area. Now, they're  
15 trying to raise it again from \$24.66 to \$33.60 per month, and that is a one-third  
16 increase in what we're paying. We think it's entirely too much to raise it that  
17 amount at one time, and because the [inaudible] is only like 2.2 something. So, we  
18 would like for someone to please try to explain to us and help us in this situation,  
19 and if we can't get help, maybe they could help the elderly or the poor that can  
20 prove their income, maybe give them a break on it.

21 I do have another question, but I don't know if it's proper at this time or  
22 not.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Ma'am, we can't answer  
24 questions, but after the meeting either the ORS Staff or  
25 the Company's staff can answer your questions.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 MS. COOPER: Thank you so much for hearing  
2 me.

3 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: All right. If you'll wait just  
4 a minute to see if any Commissioners have any questions,  
5 and by the way, you did well.

6 MS. COOPER: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioners, do any  
8 of you have any questions? Commissioner Fleming.

9 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

10 Q Yes, I just wanted to get some clarification. Your bill from Greenville is for  
11 water and sewer, so this is just the collection rate that they're charging for the  
12 sewer?

13 A Well, my sewer bill is \$13 a month, and we pay a sewer bill to United Utility  
14 for \$24.66.

15 Q Okay.

16 A That's my bill. Now, there's some that probably uses more and some uses  
17 less, but that's mine and mine alone.

18 Q Okay. But, your bill from United is just a flat rate?

19 A Yes, ma'am.

20 Q Okay. Thank you. I'd just like to say we really appreciate you all taking the  
21 time to come out and explain these issues.

22 A Yes, but we appreciate you, because we're little guys and you guys are big  
23 guys, so, and a lot of times we don't get heard, and you just don't know how  
24 much we do appreciate it. I know that all of you went to a lot of trouble to do  
25 this for us. So, I'm sure you will take into consideration the need. And, like I

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1 said, if you can't help us not get the rates on this, maybe you could have  
2 something in there for the elderly. I've worked with different people, and I  
3 personally have had to find out [inaudible] some groceries and food from my  
4 neighbors and it's really said to see them hurting like that. But, maybe you  
5 can make a concession for the elderly and not raise theirs.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any other  
7 Commissioners that had questions?

8 [No Response]

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, Ms. Cooper,  
10 very much.

11 MS. COOPER: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: I'm sorry, Mr. Hoefer,  
13 did you –

14 MR. HOEFER: No, Mr. Chairman, no questions.  
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you would, just  
17 interrupt me if you have any questions, please.

18 MR. HOEFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I'll  
19 [inaudible].

20 MR. MINGES: James Waddell.

21 MR. WADDELL: [inaudible]

22 MR. MINGES: Sir, you're welcome to come up  
23 and say it, if you'd like, or reiterate what someone else  
24 has said.

25 **WHEREUPON, James Waddell**, first being duly

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

MS. BOYD: State your name and address for the record, please.

**TESTIMONY OF MR. WADDELL:**

James Waddell, 108 Deer Creek Drive, Piedmont, South Carolina. I live in Valleybrook Subdivision. I've lived there for 16 years.

Up to last year, is when United, or United Utility raised their rates. I was paying \$55 every two months. Then all of a sudden, once a month - \$48, and now they want to increase it again, which I ain't seen nothing in the area that has been better, nothing. Why they – my question is why they're increasing it and we're seeing nothing done. If I could see it with my own eyes, I could say, yes, increase it for the better. United Utility has done nothing.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me, just one second, so we can see if we have any questions.

Any Commissioners have any questions?

*[No Response]*

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir, very much.

MR. MINGES: Sara Ford.

**WHEREUPON, Sara Ford**, first being duly sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and address for the record?

**TESTIMONY OF MS. FORD:**

My name is Sara Ford. I live at 800 Chelsey Drive, Simpsonville; that's in The  
**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Shoals.

2 Good evening gentlemen, ladies, appreciate your trip up. I appreciate  
3 you having me here to speak to you. I've lived in this neighborhood for 21  
4 years. I lived at first at 800 Chelsey Drive with my daughter and her son and  
5 her husband. If you take \$24.66 for all those years we've been here, it would  
6 be \$5,794.

7 My daughter had her front yard dug up; the street was dug up by  
8 United Utility [inaudible]. It cost her over \$500 because the sewer did not  
9 have enough fall, and we had quite a mess in the bathrooms, in the sinks,  
10 and in the bathtubs. I'm a retired lady. I worked 51 years of my life. I retired; I  
11 wish I hadn't. It's very boring. But, I think that my daughter and my son-in-law  
12 and myself have been residents of this neighborhood – there were nine  
13 places on our street when we moved there. It's not a nice neighborhood  
14 anymore. But, that doesn't have anything to do with you.

15 But, I'm retired. I make \$890 a month for my 51 years of work. I can't  
16 afford you. I'm sorry. I appreciate your service. I don't know who you bought it  
17 from, but [inaudible] underground, put it in – it doesn't work all the time, but  
18 [inaudible] – and, the people that work on these [inaudible] very nice gentlemen,  
19 and I've talked to several people. I've been in security for 29 years, and I know a  
20 lot of people, and I wish to know all of you that you could help us. And, I agree -  
21 that one person, I live by myself, should not have to pay any more for this service.

22 I want to know, well [inaudible] – I wanted to know how you associate  
23 yourself with Greenville Sewer. Where's my stuff go that they have to treat it?  
24 Where's the ponds or the holding whatever? But, my stuff goes from my  
25 house down to your sewer, to some place, and actually, we're paying twice

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 for the same service. I lived in Indiana all my [inaudible] life, and this has  
2 never been a problem there. I think that we need a break. If people can't buy  
3 houses – you're not going to get your rate, because nobody's going to be able  
4 to. I wish that you would either leave it the way it is and not raise it, or give us  
5 a break.

6 I thank you all for your attention.

7 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, ma'am, if you'll  
8 wait just a second.

9 Do any Commissioners have questions?

10 [No Response]

11 MS. FORD: Oh, I do have one more thing to say.

12 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, ma'am.

13 [Ms. Ford] In 21 years at your present rate, my son-in-law and daughter have paid  
14 almost \$6,000 for your services, and she had to have her front yard dug up  
15 three weeks ago.

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
17 much.

18 MS. FORD: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you  
19 very much. Y'all have a good evening.

20 MR. MINGES: Robert Green.

21 **WHEREUPON, Robert Green**, first being duly  
22 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

23 MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and  
24 address for the record?

25 **TESTIMONY OF MR. GREEN:**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Robert Green, 141 Greybridge Road, Pelzer, South Carolina, which is the  
2 Trolleywood Subdivision.

3 I'm here representing myself and my family, and I'm on the Water  
4 Committee at the Trolleywood Subdivision. We request that the Public  
5 Service Commission disapprove the proposed new schedule of rates for  
6 water and sewer service and all the included additional terms and conditions  
7 pertaining to the extension of these facilities as presented by United Utility  
8 Companies. United Utility Companies is a satellite company of Water  
9 Services Corporation of [inaudible] Illinois, which operates in South Carolina  
10 under other names as Carolina Water Service, Tega Cay Water Service,  
11 Utility Services of South Carolina, Inc. [inaudible] Utilities, Inc., among others  
12 I'm sure I missed.

13 According to the consent orders listed on the DHEC webpage, since  
14 the Commission granted the last rate increase, which was effective March,  
15 2002, these satellite companies have paid out in the vicinity of \$297,750 in  
16 Consent Order fines to South Carolina DHEC for non-compliance of their  
17 wastewater and water permits. This is – this number may be higher since I  
18 only researched up through 2005, and I just got tired of doing it. This is profits  
19 lost by non-compliance of their required operating permits for their facilities.  
20 This should not be considered by this Commission as a cost of their operating  
21 facilities, which in turn would be passed on to the customers as a rate  
22 increase. More money is not the answer to this situation. [Applause]

23 As the Commission is aware, United Utility was not content the last  
24 schedule of rate increases approved by the Commission in 2002, which included a  
25 phased-in rate schedule of equal installments over a three-year period to avoid the

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 rate shock on the customers. United Utility appealed your decision in court and  
2 received [inaudible] within two months of implementation. More money's just not  
3 the answer here.

4 As to the proposals for the additional terms and conditions pertaining to  
5 the extension of their facilities, most of these water and wastewater facilities were built  
6 to serve the housing [inaudible] within the city's subdivisions by the developers. To  
7 grant permission for United Utility Companies to extend these services outside of  
8 these developments, where these facilities were originally intended, would only result  
9 in future rate increases for the customers, because of the fact that they had to start  
10 doing facility upgrades due to the loss of capacity on these systems. These systems  
11 were built for these subdivisions, not for the school systems on the outside, not for the  
12 commercial businesses on the outside.

13 Public Service Commission, we would like to request that you – we'd  
14 like to see you request a disclosure of all of the expenditures and activities of  
15 the parent company and the satellite companies associated with United Utility  
16 Companies, review their compliance and rate request histories, review their  
17 proposal, and deny all aspects of their rate adjustment requests.

18 Thank you. [Applause]

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
20 questions? Commissioner Clyburn.

21 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

22 Q Mr. Green, you said you are the President of the –

23 A No, I'm a member of the Water Committee.

24 Q Member of the Water Committee. Okay. How long have you lived in –

25 A Eight years.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Q Have you ever – one of the previous persons who testified said they'd had  
2 some issues with, I guess, sewer backup. Have you ever experienced any  
3 difficulties?

4 A Sewer backup, no.

5 Q Okay. Thank you.

6 **EXAMINATION BY CHAIRMAN HAMILTON:**

7 Q I have one question. Is the Water Committee, a committee of the Homeowners  
8 Association?

9 A [inaudible]

10 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other Commissioner  
11 questions?

12 [No Response]

13 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir, very  
14 much.

15 MR. GREEN: I've got one other thing.

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, sir.

17 [Mr. Green] We receive our monthly, our bills from United Utility Companies. That's  
18 what all the customers are used to seeing when they get their water and  
19 sewer bills. This is the envelope they sent the notice of going up on the fees.  
20 It says, Utility Company – and, I have the address if I had my glasses - but, it  
21 says North Brook, Illinois. It looks like junk mail. [From audience: yep] I'm  
22 sure a lot of people threw this in their garbage can without opening it [From  
23 audience; that's right] because - I'm sure if it wasn't intended to deceive; I'm  
24 sure it did deceive a lot of people.

25 MR. GREEN: If you'd like a copy of this, then I can

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 leave this.

2 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Yes, sir, if you would like  
3 to, would you like to make the notice letter part of the  
4 record.

5 MR. GREEN: Yes, I would.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

7 MR. MINGES: Rick Leonardi.

8 **WHEREUPON, Rick Leonardi**, first being duly  
9 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

10 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
11 for the record, please?

12 **TESTIMONY OF MR. LEONARDI:**

13 My name is Rick Leonardi. I live in Trolleywood Subdivision at 221 Riverdale  
14 Drive. I've been there just a little bit over two years; moved up here from  
15 Florida.

16 One of the things that I noticed early on, and I did a little bit of research  
17 on the DHEC website, was that United Utility is required to provide water that  
18 is of a proper quality and substantially free of objectionable taste, color, and  
19 odor, which unfortunately they fail on all three counts on that. Our water, and  
20 other residents can testify as well, sometimes it's the color of water-downed  
21 tea. [inaudible] unless you have [inaudible] water filters, which I have had to  
22 install, obviously at my expense. Their water quality is not fit to drink and even  
23 after going through two [inaudible] water filters in the refrigerator, it still has an  
24 odor and taste to it. This has been the case since we moved here two years  
25 ago.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1           In addition, the pricing, which I know you've already heard some about  
2           that, and I don't want to beat a horse to death, but this basically is two to three times  
3           the same amount that you can get – what you're going to pay with Greenville Water.  
4           It's about twice the amount that you pay for sewer, and all this is for a 30-year old  
5           system where basically they are maintaining a well, and I don't know whether this is  
6           fact or not, you might correct me, but I believe that the well was originally perhaps put  
7           in by the contractor that built the subdivision, or the developer that built the subdivision  
8           and then subsequently it was – it's being managed by United Utility.

9           I know that we've had a couple of water outages over the past two  
10          years, one of which I observed where they went – it's a six inch iron pipe, and  
11          it was going over a bridge that where it happened to give way. One of the  
12          supports gave way and it cracked the [inaudible], and so, we had no water  
13          pressure for about four hours. So, we walked down there to see what was  
14          going on, and they put basically a clamp on it. Well, I assumed well, okay,  
15          that's a temporary fix until they can come out and replace the pipe. Well, a  
16          couple years later, as far as I know, that clamp is still sitting there.

17          So, what we have experienced, in my opinion, is a total neglect of the  
18          maintenance that we are paying for in our exorbitantly high rates as they are  
19          currently. We've got 30-year old piping there that is – we've even tried to go  
20          and check to see if there were other alternatives available as far as maybe  
21          with Greenville Water or another carrier or whoever to provide this to us. They  
22          won't even take the system because it's old. In my opinion, if you're going to  
23          receive the dividends, and the stockholders of the utility company and the  
24          employees and the utility company and whoever else profits from this  
25          contractual arrangement they have with us, in that case then they need to be

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1       ponying up for the maintenance on this and replace things when they need to  
2       be replaced. It doesn't make sense. You know, instead they put band-aids on  
3       things, you know. It's — I kind of feel like Trolleywood is the redheaded  
4       stepchild here, and we're not able to — we've got Greenville Water running  
5       right by the entrance to our subdivision, yet we're not even able to tap into it  
6       and lower our rates by probably two-thirds, because of the difficulties that  
7       they've experienced in the maintenance of this.

8               The average bill for a family of four, which I have, and we have every  
9       energy-efficient appliance that you can imagine in the house, including the  
10      low-cost washing machine and everything that goes with it, and our bill for a  
11      28-day cycle; it's not even 31-day cycle, it's a 28-day cycle — our bill last  
12      month was \$124, and that's conserving water and that's not even watering  
13      the grass. You know, and with their proposed rate increase, I guess that goes  
14      up to around \$200 a month. Well, you know, not everybody can afford that.  
15      This is a cost issue, and quite frankly, you shouldn't have to. I mean, the  
16      water doesn't cost anymore to pull out of the ground today than it did five  
17      years ago. The electric costs haven't even gone up that much. I mean, so, I  
18      don't know how you can justify that.

19             My question to United Utility, and really to the Commission, is what  
20      about the efficiencies. I mean, I manage a credit union for a living. If I went in and  
21      adjusted everybody's loan rates up and doubled and tripled them every couple of  
22      years, they would call me a usurer. I don't think — I think they have a double  
23      standard. I don't think the same standards are being applied. [*Applause*]

24             I would just ask the Commission, you know, to either, well, deny their  
25      request first of all and if they're not content servicing us and giving us the

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

proper level of maintenance and everything we need, then perhaps they should subsidize the costs of replacing the piping so that we can hook into another system and then we'll be a monkey off of their back.

[Applause]

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any questions?

Commissioner Mitchell.

COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr.

Chairman.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER MITCHELL:**

Q You stated \$124 bill. I just want clarification, is that \$124 for wastewater and water?

A For sewer and water.

Q Sewer and water, thank you very much.

A Per month.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

[From audience: for 28 days, for 28 days]

COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Howard.

**EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER HOWARD:**

Q [inaudible] following up with Commissioner Mitchell, do you have your water usage, how many thousand of gallons of water you used that month, is it broken down on your bill as to your water usage charge?

A Yes, and I'm not even sure that the meter – the meters are probably so old, I'm not even sure they're correct. In fact, that was going to be my next step, is

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 to call somebody to come out there and measure, test those meters to make  
2 sure they're right, because I don't even think they are. I think that that stuff is  
3 busted and [inaudible] as much as the rest of it is.

4 Q Have you called the utility company about the bill [inaudible] and asked them  
5 to check the accuracy of the bill? Have you ever done that?

6 A I've called the utility company on a couple of different occasions, not for that  
7 particular purpose, but for when service had been, basically was non-existent.

8 Q Okay. Thank you very much.

9 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, I have a question.

10 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Fleming  
11 [inaudible].

12 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

13 Q Could you go into a little more detail about the service you talked about -  
14 those issues about lack of maintenance, could you tell us a little bit more  
15 about your call about the service?

16 A Well, I know that utility companies, at least I believe this to be true, they're  
17 required to do periodic testing. They're required to do periodic flushes and  
18 things of that nature to the system and to the best of my knowledge in the two  
19 plus years that I've been there, we've only had one and that was just in the  
20 past couple of months. I don't recall any other time, unless y'all know of any,  
21 where they've actually done any flushing or testing of the lines. I certainly  
22 haven't received notice of it if they did. As far as, I don't recall – there's been  
23 several instances where we had outages for extended periods of time. One of  
24 those happened to be Easter Sunday morning.

25 Q Of the water?

1 A Yes, where we absolutely had no water at all and then when it did come back  
2 on – I don't know [inaudible] like 12 hours or something we didn't have water.  
3 Okay, I do know that we had tea-colored water when it finally did come back  
4 on. That was not – it was out from – it was well over night, a well over night  
5 period. It started about 8:00 or 10:00 the previous day and went through like  
6 noon the next day.

7 Q And, you called and reported this?

8 A Oh, yeah. We called them repeatedly. I think everybody in the subdivision  
9 called them repeatedly.

10 Q Have you ever had notices not to use the water?

11 A I don't believe I've ever had a notice not to use it. I think I remember seeing  
12 the notice as far as they're going to be flushing the lines. But, I don't recall  
13 ever seeing that.

14 Q Okay. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Mr. Hoefer.

16 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

17 Q Mr. Leonardi, I'd like to ask you a couple of questions. That month that you  
18 had \$124 bill, was your usage about 13,900 gallons?

19 A I don't recall what the total usage was. They said it was about 400 and  
20 something gallons a day, which to me didn't even seem practical because the  
21 kids were gone – they had to go with their dad during the summer, so they  
22 were gone part of that time, and my wife and I work, so we were gone all day.

23 Q So, you don't know what – your answer is you don't know what the gallons of  
24 usage that was billed.

25 A I know that it was – I think the average, I looked at the average and it was

1           somewhere between 400 and 500 gallons a day.

2       Q     When you said that you called the Company, did you call the Company or  
3           were you saying that other people in the subdivision called the Company?

4       A     Mister, I didn't call about the \$124 bill. I called about the outages that we had.

5       Q     Was that the outage related to the cracked line on the bridge or was that a  
6           separate outage?

7       A     We called on both of them. It was a separate outage.

8       Q     Okay. When was that?

9       A     That particular one was Easter Sunday, and I believe it was – that wasn't this  
10           past year, it was the year before. So, it was 2004.

11      Q     Thank you very much.

12                               MR. HOEFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13                               CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

14                               MR. MINGES: Cynthia Rice, please.

15                               **WHEREUPON, Cynthia Price**, first being duly  
16                               sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

17                               MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
18                               for the record, please?

19       **TESTIMONY OF MS. PRICE:**

20           Cynthia Price. I live at 710 Chelsey Drive, Simpsonville. My question is  
21           exactly why do we have to pay this. I mean we have Greenville Water and  
22           Sewer. When I first moved in here 11½ years ago, my husband was still living  
23           then. I've been widowed now for six years and raising a seven year old son.  
24           When I first moved in there, we were told, or I was told, that [inaudible]  
25           special permit obtained to transport our sewage. I called finally and asked

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 again, why was I having to pay this. They told me they were responsible for  
2 our sewer, and I said, well, we pay it to Greenville Water also. Then I asked –  
3 I called back again, and I spoke to a lady and I asked, well, just where is the  
4 collection site at. She didn't know. I said, well, can you find out. She said hold  
5 on. So, she went back [inaudible] pass this down to [inaudible] in Operations,  
6 he didn't know. When I moved in there 11 years ago, I was paying \$18.25  
7 every two months. Now, it's \$24.66, and they're fixing to go up to \$33.60.

8 Being a single mother and a widow, it's hard to pay all these bills when  
9 they keep coming in, when you get Social Security and trying to raise my son. There's  
10 a lot of elderly people, and a lot of poor people that live where I live, and it's not a very  
11 good neighborhood [inaudible].

12 My question is, why do we have to pay it. We pay twice as much as  
13 Greenville Water, and they couldn't answer my question. Can any of y'all  
14 answer my question?

15 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you have questions  
16 related to any Commissioners, you'll have to after the  
17 meeting ask, you'll have to ask the Company those  
18 questions. I'm sorry.

19 MS. RICE: As long as somebody can answer why  
20 we have to pay it.

21 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any other  
22 questions?

23 *[No Response]*

24 MS. RICE: Thank y'all very much.

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you very much.

1 Before we call the next witness, I know Senator  
2 Anderson and Representative Allen have another  
3 meeting that they told us earlier they had to be at, at  
4 7:30. We would like to thank both of you for being with us  
5 this evening.

6 SENATOR ANDERSON/REPRESENTATIVE

7 ALLEN: We thank the Commission.

8 [Applause]

9 MR. MINGES: Rica Rose Conover.

10 **WHEREUPON, Rica Rose Conover**, first being  
11 duly sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

12 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
13 for the record, please?

14 **TESTIMONY OF MS. CONOVER:**

15 Rica Rose Conover, I reside at 207 Riverdale Drive. That's in Pelzer, South  
16 Carolina, and that is the Trolleywood Subdivision. I'd like to reiterate, thank  
17 you very much for coming and showing the interest.

18 I've heard so much heartfelt testimony here this evening, and I can only  
19 second many of the opinions with regard to the rate increase. It's incredulous to  
20 me, coming from Southern California where my husband and I lived in the middle  
21 of a desert, and we only paid \$30 for water a month, and when we moved to  
22 Greenville, South Carolina, we were paying an average [inaudible] about \$80  
23 every 28 days, just couldn't comprehend that.

24 I won't go into the quality of the water because you've already heard  
25 that. But, now they want to increase our rates once more. We are all very

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1 hard-working people. We take great pride in our homes. We love where we  
2 live. If you've never been to Trolleywood, it's just a beautiful little [inaudible].  
3 You know, people aren't going to want to buy our homes if we have to sell  
4 them because they're going to want to look at bills. They're going to want to  
5 look at the electricity bill, the water bill – who's going to want to buy a home if  
6 they're going to be paying \$150 to \$200 a month, 28 days, for water. It's just  
7 really unfair to us. I can't help but feel that there's a certain amount of greed  
8 here. [Applause]

9 I really hope that the Commission will take into consideration our  
10 situation. Ms. Fleming, you questioned about if we'd received notices not to use  
11 the water – I just wanted to say that, yes. I've only been in Trolleywood for four  
12 years, but, yes, there have been times that we've been told that we had to boil the  
13 water, not to use the water. You know, it is a little disturbing as you're trying to get  
14 ready for Easter Sunday Mass, and there's no water or try to prepare dinner. And,  
15 then they want an increase. It's just totally outrageous. And, I'm sure that if you  
16 lived in our neighborhood and you had – if you were faced with this increase, you  
17 would be just as angry.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Just a second, please.

20 Do we have any questions from any Commissioners?

21 [No Response]

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
23 much.

24 MS. CONOVER: Thank you, sir.

25 [Applause]

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 MR. MINGES: Jerry Tant.

2 **WHEREUPON, Jerry Tant**, first being duly sworn,  
3 assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

4 MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and  
5 address for the record, please?

6 **TESTIMONY OF MR. TANT:**

7 My name is Jerry Tant. I live at 108 Kingswood Circle. This subdivision is out  
8 on the eastern part of Woodruff Road, close to the county line. We have lived  
9 there for 28 years.

10 My wife is a 17 year breast cancer survivor. I am a 12 year cancer  
11 survivor. I am also a six year survivor from a massive heart attack where I had  
12 seven bypasses done on my heart, and I owe in medical bills [inaudible] for  
13 \$22,000 and \$3,000 for a quarter, and my bill, last month's bill was for \$40. Now  
14 they tell me that my daily consumption average is 200 gallons. Now, my wife and I  
15 have not drank this water or cooked with it for 17 years when she was diagnosed  
16 with cancer. Then I get a notice that this bill is going to double in price. Now, my  
17 question is, how am I supposed to make that on a fixed income, how am I  
18 supposed to keep up with everything that's increasing, and then the water bill is  
19 going to double. So, I checked into two drilling companies about drilling a well on  
20 my property. At the new rate, within four and a half years I can pay for this well.  
21 Why should I have to pay \$40 extra a month for water that I can't even drink. If I  
22 drink the water with my medication, and if I drive within a quarter of a mile, I have  
23 to stop the car and open the door and throw-up. Now, for the past two weeks, my  
24 water has smelled so strong with chlorine, Clorox, or whatever they have put in it  
25 to make it come up to the standards of DHEC, until we don't even bathe in it. I just

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 want to tell you, I do not get enough Social Security money to pay for all these  
2 increases. I think that you're doing the elderly, especially who are on fixed  
3 incomes, an injustice by if you do permit this Company to double their prices.

4 *[From audience: that's right] [Applause]*

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
6 questions, Commissioners?

7 *[No Response]*

8 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir, very  
9 much.

10 *[Applause]*

11 MR. MINGES: Tigner Culpepper.

12 **WHEREUPON, Tigner Culpepper**, first being duly  
13 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

14 MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and  
15 address for the record?

16 **TESTIMONY OF MR. CULPEPPER:**

17 My name is Tigner Culpepper. I live at 325 Shadowmere Drive. We've lived in  
18 Trolleywood since about 1980.

19 Originally, the original [inaudible] and the other builders basically just  
20 gave them the whole system for nothing, for \$1. So, they had no cost basis in it at  
21 the very beginning. We went to a few Public Service Commission hearings years  
22 and years ago. The rates just got ridiculous and at the time, I checked with them -  
23 in the mid 80s, it was already tripled to Greenville Water System rates [inaudible].  
24 We couldn't understand, but they said that they averaged everything – all the other  
25 companies. So, we had to pay [inaudible] even though they had no costs basis

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 in our system. Of course, it was sold. I don't know what they sold it for.

2 But, what my concern is that I think that they should be required to open  
3 their books; that we can look and see why these rates are there, and I think that  
4 the testimony [inaudible]. [Applause] You know, these big conglomerates buy all  
5 this stuff and then they – you don't know who they're paying [inaudible], you know,  
6 and I'm not just, I'm not just, you know, I'm not saying this is true, but you don't  
7 know unless you open the books. You don't know who they've got on their payroll  
8 or what kind of padding [inaudible], you know, they're getting. You know, a lot of  
9 this kind of stuff is done. And, we all work for a living and we all – and, people here  
10 that manage businesses, we have to make a profit. We can't just go out and  
11 spend all this money.

12 I think somebody, Mr. Green said that they had this – all these fines  
13 that he's researched. If that's the case, they shouldn't be allowed to try to get  
14 that money from us. That's not right. That's a conflict of interest. If you look at  
15 it, if they're actually - they should be penalized. If they're violating the law by  
16 not giving us quality water and charging triple rates and not maintaining  
17 systems and then they're getting fined – fines are penalties. And, then they're  
18 allowed – you allow them to raise the rates on us – we're the ones that are  
19 being penalized for their bad behavior. [Applause] [inaudible] When we  
20 speed down the road or something or get a ticket, we've got to pay higher  
21 insurance rates ourselves. We don't get to give it to the policeman. [Laughter  
22 from audience] I mean, you know, why don't we start doing – why don't we  
23 get the policemen to pay our high insurance rates. That's what they're doing;  
24 same difference.

25 So, I really think that the – if they're going to charge these kind of rates,

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 we should be allowed to see their books. I just think that ought to be the way it  
2 should be, and they should prove to us why, and they should not be allowed to  
3 include in their costs their penalties and their fines.

4 And, the quality out there is not that good. It's not that good.

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me just a  
6 minute, sir.

7 Commissioners, you have any questions?

8 *[No Response]*

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

10 *[Applause]*

11 MR. MINGES: Dale Conover.

12 **WHEREUPON, Dale Conover** first being duly  
13 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

14 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
15 for the record, please?

16 **TESTIMONY OF MR. CONOVER:**

17 Dale Conover, at 207 Riverdale Drive, Pelzer, South Carolina. I live in the  
18 Trolleywood Subdivision.

19 There isn't much more I can say. I think Mr. Tigner, Mr. Leonardi, Mr.  
20 Green, and my wife, Rica Rose, summed it all up. It's just amazing that the  
21 two of us, my wife and I, we don't pay, we don't get our water from United  
22 Utility to water our lawn – it's basically just for my wife and I to bathe and to  
23 cook with. But, we're paying in excess of \$80 every 28 days. As Mr. Tigner  
24 mentioned, it appears that we're paying for the inefficiencies of United Utility.  
25 They really do need to open up and show us – justify why they're charging us

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 such exorbitant rates, because it appears to us that they are a mismanaged  
2 organization, and we're having to pay for it.

3 That's all I have to say.

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

5 [Applause]

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any questions from the  
7 Commissioners?

8 [No Response]

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

10 MR. MINGES: Blake Morgan.

11 MR. MORGAN: Mr. Chairman, I have nothing to  
12 add at this time.

13 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. MINGES: Elaine Downs.

15 **WHEREUPON, ELAINE DOWNS**, first being duly  
16 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

17 MS. BOYD: Would you please state your name and  
18 address for the record?

19 **TESTIMONY OF MS. DOWNS:**

20 I'm Debra Elaine Downs, at 105 Third Day Street, Piedmont, South Carolina,  
21 District 25.

22 The 17<sup>th</sup> of this month, I've been down in Canterbury Subdivision; it will  
23 be 28 years, 29 years. When I first moved down there, it was \$3 every three  
24 months. And, I'm – overall, [inaudible] I mean, there's a water bill, there's a  
25 sewage bill, and now our sewage bill is \$48 a month. That's ridiculous. For

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 some households with five and six; only two people in my household. Now,  
2 I'm comparing my [inaudible] water bill. The different communities have  
3 different prices. That's why I'm a little confused. If everybody's paying a  
4 sewage bill, why ain't everybody on the same page? Some paying \$24; we're  
5 paying \$48. Some paying \$100 or more.

6 I have no other questions, but to ask why. I'm concerned about this. It's  
7 just a sewage bill; it's not drinking water. We don't [inaudible]; we pay the  
8 county. We're provided by Greenville County for drinking water The sewage  
9 bill, \$48 a month; that's ridiculous. From \$3 every three months from the time  
10 that I moved down there to the present time; it's ridiculous.

11 That's all I have to say.

12 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
13 questions?

14 [No Response]

15 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
16 much.

17 MR. MINGES: Virginia Grey.

18 **WHEREUPON, Virginia Grey**, first being duly  
19 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

20 MS. BOYD: If you would, please state your name and  
21 address for the record.

22 **TESTIMONY OF MS. GREY:**

23 Virginia Grey. I live at 124 Fourth Day Street, Piedmont, South Carolina;  
24 that's in the Canterbury Subdivision.

25 I've been in Canterbury the last 28 years and when I moved there, my

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 wastewater bill was \$7; now it's \$48. I've had two kids, that no longer live there,  
2 so it's just my husband and I. Our wastewater went up from a household of four to  
3 a household of two now. Our water bill basically \$32, \$33 a month; Greenville  
4 Water System, and we're paying \$48 per month wastewater. That totally exceeds  
5 our water bill, out-of-sight. I don't think our water bill, as far as I know, has really  
6 increased that much since we've been there. But, the wastewater, it's steadily,  
7 steadily, steadily going up.

8 My service, because I speak for myself, has not been good at all. My  
9 husband and I, we have a tree in our front yard. I went to wash clothes in my  
10 washing machine, water come out of my commode. I called several plumbers  
11 because I don't know who services what. United Utility; what do they serve?  
12 They don't serve us. Okay, if this is your sewer or – I didn't know whether it  
13 was the sewer or what. So, we paid plumber, after plumber, after plumber.  
14 We finally ended up having to have our front yard dug up, our pipes replaced;  
15 at our expense. Okay, we did that.

16 Then within the last year or so, we're back to the same problem; the  
17 water coming out – you wash your clothes, water coming out of my commode,  
18 and I've had to replace – we've had to replace our flooring twice because of  
19 the water. Okay, because we may be in the bed sleeping – when we get up,  
20 the floor's full of water, and at our expense, okay. So, we had a plumber,  
21 called a plumber out. The plumber stated that our problem was coming from  
22 across the street; the main hole over there across the street. There's a tree  
23 right beside it, in the neighbor's yard across the street. And, the roots from  
24 that tree was getting into that line, clogging ours up. And, they said we  
25 needed to call United Utility, and which we did. They came out there and

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1 looked, okay – told us that the tree really needed to be cut down. The tree's  
2 still there. The roots come up in the lines when they ready. So, we have a  
3 floor full of water.

4 Secondly, my husband and I, we weren't both able to work. I'm on a  
5 fixed income now because I'm not able to work. My medical bills – out of sight. My  
6 husband has medical bills – out of sight, medicine. We have to decide; do we pay  
7 the utilities or do we take our medicine this month.

8 So, and then too, our homes. We can't sell our house; who's going to  
9 buy it if they've got to pay this much sewer. So, how're we going to sell it? So,  
10 where're just stuck there. We can't hook onto Greenville Water System; so,  
11 they tell us. So, we've got to just accept whatever they give us.

12 Then, personally, I feel like we need a decrease in the water bill – sewer  
13 bill, I mean. *[Applause]* The cost of living and everything else going up, and  
14 wages standing still, going down, because a lot of people now are out of jobs and  
15 cannot work. But, this is still going on. I mean, I don't understand it. How do  
16 we know how much usage we use for our sewer? Everybody uses the same in  
17 our neighborhood, so it seems, because we all pay the same.

18 At one time – no, I don't always send money to the bill on time; I'm going to  
19 tell you, because I can't. But, I send my payment in whenever I got my bill; they said I  
20 didn't pay it. I called and talked to a very hateful lady *[laughter from audience]* that if I  
21 could have got my hands on her, well *[inaudible]*. But, she told me that she took my  
22 monthly payment and applied it toward a deposit because we were late in paying our  
23 bill. I mean, no water and no anything. We've been there years and then all of a  
24 sudden you take my payment and put it toward the deposit because you want to do  
25 it. I disagree with that. I totally disagree. I just – all I can say is I think we need

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 to get a decrease instead of an increase.

2 Thank you for your time.

3 [Applause]

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
5 questions?

6 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

7 Q Yes, Ms. Grey, you made mention of the battle you had with the backups  
8 where you had to call the plumbers – did you ever get resolution from that in  
9 terms of when it was – when you finally figured out that, from what I'm hearing  
10 from you, that the problem was not on your property. Did the problem – when  
11 did that occur, I guess is my [inaudible].

12 A Actually, that was this year. I can't say what – I can't tell you what month it  
13 was unless I go home and look at my checkbook because I had to pay the  
14 plumber, so that's the only way I can tell. But, like I say, after United Utility  
15 came out there – as far as I know, the tree's still there, and the only solution  
16 that they told us right now, until they could get someone to do whatever they  
17 have to do, is that whenever the roots get back in the lines across the street  
18 that they come out and chew them up with something. But, by the time that's  
19 done, my floor is flooded and my bathroom's running over into my hallway.  
20 We've had to replace carpet – flooded the bathroom floors behind that.

21 Q Have you ever told them or asked them for any type of reimbursement from  
22 United if you determined that –

23 A No, I haven't, because up until now I didn't know who was responsible for  
24 what. I mean, we don't know actually what they're responsible for. So, no, I  
25 haven't.

1 Q So, the plumber did not tell you that this is on this side of that; that's on that  
2 side of – where the property line is.

3 A That's when I found out, and that's this year.

4 Q Okay. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any other  
6 questions?

7 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: I have a question.

8 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Commissioner Fleming.

9 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

10 Q I'd like some clarification on the [inaudible] that came back from your bill when  
11 you called – was that this year?

12 A No, that wasn't this year.

13 Q When was that?

14 A That's been a couple of years ago.

15 Q A couple of years ago?

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q Did you have to go back and pay the bill?

18 A I sure did.

19 Q So, you paid twice for that bill?

20 A Right, yes, because she said that they applied that payment to, like I said, a  
21 deposit, because we had been late paying.

22 Q Had you ever been given any written information about a deposit?

23 A No, I hadn't.

24 Q So, there's been – that's the resolution, you just paid your bill twice.

25 A I had no choice.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 Q Okay. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

3 Mr. Hoefer?

4 **CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. HOEFER:**

5 Q Yes, ma'am, Ms. Grey, the sewer backup where you described the roots  
6 getting in the line, would that have been in November of 2005?

7 A November, 2005 – sir, I really can't say – no, not the last time it was, because  
8 the last time it was this year. And, we have had our, like I said, so many times  
9 until I can't say if it was November, 2005, or not.

10 Q Was the last time you called the Company about a backup in November, 2005,  
11 maybe?

12 A No, I don't think it was in November.

13 Q Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
15 much.

16 MR. MINGES: Barbara Mahaffey.

17 MS. MAHAFFEY: I'm not going to [inaudible]. It's  
18 already been stated.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am.

20 MR. MINGES: Betty Ferguson.

21 **WHEREUPON, Betty Ferguson** first being duly  
22 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

23 MS. BOYD: All right. State your name and address  
24 for the record, please.

25 **TESTIMONY OF MS. FERGUSON:**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 My name is Betty Ferguson, and I live at 115 Lancaster Street, Simpsonville,  
2 South Carolina 29680.

3 I'm so glad that you all came and that you're concerned with our  
4 complaints. My complaints have already been stated. I'm just concerned about why  
5 we're paying two bills, two sewage bills. I'm 81 years old, and my income is very, very  
6 limited, and I'm paying – I'm paying most of it for bills. I can't do anything else but pay  
7 bills. I would just like to know why we are paying two sewage bills, which has been  
8 stated. And, I'd just like to, please, to get an answer why we're paying two bills.

9 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am.

10 Again, I'd tell you – after the hearing's closed, if you  
11 would like to discuss this with the Company officials or  
12 with the Office of Regulatory Staff, feel free to do so.

13 MS. FERGUSON: I will. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
15 questions? Commissioner Clyburn.

16 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER CLYBURN:**

17 Q Ms. Ferguson, first of all I want to say how great you look and hopefully that –  
18 I know we're not related, but I hope I've got some of your genes somewhere.  
19 Secondly, how long – you said you lived in Simpsonville, how long have you  
20 lived there?

21 A I've lived there 16 years.

22 Q 16 years, okay. Thank you.

23 A Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON; Thank you, ma'am, very  
25 much.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

[Applause]

MR. MINGES: Linda Stazer.

**WHEREUPON, Linda Stazer**, first being duly sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

MS. BOYD: All right. Please state your name and address for the record, please.

**TESTIMONY OF MS. STAZER:**

My name is Linda Stazer, S-t-a-z-e-r. I live at 127 Greybridge Road, Trolleywood Subdivision. I've been a resident there with my husband for the last 15 years.

The question has been raised several times about the usage rates, and I brought with me today a copy of my last six bills. I have them summarized here by usage of water, of sewage, the DHEC fees, and the total. On the average, we've been paying \$72.43 per month. When we first moved to this house, we were paying approximately \$90 every two months for the same services from United Utility.

We have had several complaints with United Utility. I feel that their responses are very arbitrary. The usage rates on here go from 360 units to 4,520 units. I have several times asked them, do you estimate. They say no, every month they check our water meter. I [inaudible] two people cannot vary that much in their usage. We have never been on vacation for more than five days during this period of time, and yet, one month we're less than 10% of the most current month.

I have another situation that goes back to May 19, 2004, where I received a bill from them; in the comment section it says, according to our records, your sewer bill is past due, please submit your payment in full immediately or it will be necessary to discontinue your sewer service. In this event, blah, blah, blah,

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 they will charge me \$250 to reconnect. My bill says I have a prior balance of zero.

2 I contacted them and their response was, this is in response to my letter, the bill  
3 for the account – the account is current, and the service is not in jeopardy of being  
4 discontinued; our corporate office has determined that the error that occurred on  
5 this bill was not due to system fault. Well, what was it due to?

6 Third instance, going back to my bill of September '04, I received a bill  
7 that said that my usage was 28,270 units for the month, an average of 831  
8 units per day, two people. My bill for that one month period was going to be  
9 \$189.60. I called them up. I said, this can't be right. You've got my records, you know  
10 what my usage is. The number of the family has not changed; what happened? They  
11 said, well, you must have filled the pool. I have no pool. *[Laughter from audience]* You  
12 must have been watering your grass. We don't use their water to water our grass.  
13 How did we use up 28,000 gallons of water in this 34-day period? They couldn't  
14 answer it. They said, we'll have somebody come out and do a meter check. I said  
15 again, is this possibly a question that you were not checking my meter and billing me  
16 on an estimate and this is a catch-up? Absolutely not. They came out – they came out  
17 and the gentleman said to me, would you go into your house and confirm that there's  
18 no water running. I did that. We both looked at the meter. He said, you'll notice it's not  
19 moving. I said, yes, I notice it's not moving. He said, that means you don't have a leak,  
20 great. He said, go in and flush your toilets, come out, and we looked at the meter  
21 again. It's moving. He said, that proves that the meter is working. I said, is it accurate.  
22 He said, I'm sure it is. I said, that still doesn't explain how I could use all this water. He  
23 said, that's not my responsibility; take it up with the people in accounting. So, I called  
24 the lady in accounting, and I must have got the same lady that you spoke to  
25 *[Laughter from audience]* because she told me I had two choices. They had

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1       done a meter test and by your standards, that's what she said, I had no excuse  
2       other than to pay the bill or have my service disconnected. No explanation; just  
3       arbitrary. If they treat all their customers this way, the way they've treated me and my  
4       husband over the last year, it's no wonder you get all these people coming out here to  
5       complain about a rate increase. A rate increase that has gone up at least 50% in total  
6       and 100% on sewage. And, if you'd like copies of these documents, I'll be happy to  
7       give them to you.

8                               CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you would – if you'd  
9                               like to make them a part of the record, if you'd present  
10                              them to Ms. Boyd, we'd appreciate it.

11   [Ms. Ferguson] My husband and I love living in our house. We love living in our  
12       development. It is a nice place, but it is a place that has been plagued with  
13       water problems since we joined the community. Soon after we came to the  
14       community in 1992, we attended a meeting where people brought in samples  
15       of the water that they were getting. Inviting United Utility to those meetings,  
16       we said, look at the water quality we're getting. They said, oh, you've got a  
17       bacteria in your lines; we're going to have to flush them. They came in, put a  
18       sign at the front of our entrance and for three hours once a week, we didn't  
19       have water while they flushed out our lines. They haven't done that recently  
20       because people have gotten sick and tired of keeping complaining, because  
21       the problem hasn't gone away. They just come in and put a band-aid on it to  
22       try to shut us up and sooner or later you get sick and tired of it. [Applause  
23       from audience]

24                              Like other people have said tonight, we don't want you to reward them  
25       for their lack of efficiency, their lack of customer concern, their price increases

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1 that have gone unmatched with improvements in service. We'd like you to  
2 give them what they give us; thank you, but no thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
5 questions? Oh, excuse me, Commissioner Wright.

6 **EXAMINATION BY COMMISSIONER WRIGHT:**

7 Q Ms. Ferguson, back to the 28,000 gallon water bill. To this day, there's been  
8 no resolution to that; is that correct?

9 A The resolution was that I paid \$189 rather than have my water service  
10 disconnected and pay \$250 to have it restarted. But, they have never come  
11 back to me with a resolution. And, the bills thereafter when back down to the  
12 normal rate, no explanation.

13 Q When your – the previous bills where you had the range of usage, where you  
14 said it was like a low of what – 13 units to a high of 300?

15 A 360 units to 4,520.

16 Q Was there any explanation given as to what the discrepancy was there?

17 A No. If you asked me, the two of us, my husband and I, probably use roughly  
18 about 2,000 gallons a month. That has been roughly the average, but why it goes  
19 low and why it goes high; they won't explain it to me because I've asked several  
20 times – it's your usage, and the meter is accurate. And, they will swear by it and  
21 they get annoyed if you question the fact that they are checking the meter every  
22 month.

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Any other questions?

24 [No Response]

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 much.

2 [Applause]

3 MR. MINGES: Robert Keebler, please come  
4 forward.

5 **WHEREUPON, Robert Keebler**, first being duly  
6 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

7 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
8 for the record, please?

9 **TESTIMONY OF MR. KEEBLER:**

10 Q Robert Keebler, Kingswood Circle.

11 I didn't exactly know why I was coming tonight, other than I was asked by  
12 a neighbor, and then I see another neighbor here, Mr. Tant from Kingswood Circle.  
13 I've lived in the house on Kingswood Circle since 1992, about 13 years, and I want to  
14 digress for a second.

15 [inaudible] public school teacher, and one of the things that I've learned  
16 as a public school teacher was to listen to my students. I learned that over 30 years.  
17 Because, eventually I began to hear things that I hadn't particularly paid attention to,  
18 and all of sudden they were telling me things that seemed to be coming from various  
19 parts of the room in various corners. So, I learned that when that happened, being a  
20 fallible person like everybody is. I've made some mistakes, and I needed to clean my  
21 act up as much as they needed to clean their's up. And, I think I've been hearing  
22 some of that tonight.

23 For instance, and I don't have any records and I can't tell you exactly when it  
24 happened, but I did have a situation once that I can recall where I had a very large  
25 bill. I called the Company, and the bill was taken care of, and that was it. And,

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 I wasn't threatened. Nobody told me, maybe I was going to have to put some  
2 money down on a deposit or anything like that. All I know, it was taken care of  
3 and I feel that this system that we have, and by the way, I have a septic tank.  
4 I don't have any sewage removal; I have a septic tank. But, I'm [inaudible].

5 I feel like – probably the system is monitored fairly well, but I don't think  
6 the equipment has been updated. I know it hasn't been updated in the 13 years that  
7 I've been there. I've got the same the gauges out there in front that's always been  
8 there. I know they go down to the pumphouse a lots and do what they do; whatever  
9 that is. But, you know, I really feel that we're hearing some things and that all of us  
10 should probably pay attention to what we're hearing. I know I'm paying attention.

11 So, thank you very much, and by the way, I compliment this group on  
12 their civic activity here. I think it's pretty wonderful. I'm happy to be a part of it  
13 and witness it. I'm proud of everybody here tonight.

14 Thank you very much.

15 [Applause]

16 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Does anyone have any  
17 questions of the last witness?

18 [No Response]

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir.

20 I believe this was the last person that had signed  
21 up to speak; however, if any other person failed to sign  
22 up and would like to appear before the Commission at  
23 this time, we'll be happy to extend the time to hear you.

24 Mr. Tant, I believe you've already had your turn

25 sir.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 MR. TANT: I know I have, but in reference to what  
2 Bob just told you – the original plan for that subdivision  
3 was not for everyone to depend on one well. [inaudible]

4 [Speaking among audience]

5 [Mr. Tant] [inaudible] the original plan was that  
6 whoever had the water system was to punch another well  
7 to supply that [inaudible].

8 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Excuse me, sir. They  
9 can't hear your testimony, and you're only allowed to  
10 testify once. I apologize for that. I wish we had time. But  
11 if this information is important, if you could give it to the  
12 ORS after the meeting, it would certainly be beneficial to  
13 them, I'm sure.

14 Do we have anyone that has not spoken? Yes, sir,  
15 would you like to come and be sworn in?

16 **WHEREUPON, Jim Warren**, first being duly  
17 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

18 MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
19 for the record, please?

20 **TESTIMONY OF MR. WARREN:**

21 Jim Warren, 312 Shadowmere Drive, Pelzer, and that's the Trolleywood  
22 Subdivision.

23 We've been in the neighborhood for like just a year and a couple of  
24 weeks. The couple of concerns that I have – the one on the matter of the  
25 reading the meter on a monthly basis; they do not. We had a pool rebuilt in

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 January, the middle of January. It was refilled with 21,000 gallons of water.

2 We did not get the bill for that water usage until March. They had missed a  
3 whole billing cycle [inaudible] the billing that it should have been on when the  
4 meter was read per the date of the bill, that 21, 000 gallons should have been  
5 on there. It didn't come on there until the following month. I don't have those  
6 bills with me today, obviously. But, those are the facts.

7 The other concern that I have as far as service, I think I spoke with the  
8 same person that many other people have spoken to at United Utility. In  
9 reference to - after the pool was filled, the pool was balanced by [inaudible]  
10 Pools and they were concerned about the higher level of copper. Just out of  
11 curiosity, I asked for – I called once, it was probably the first part of February.  
12 I called for a water analysis report. A month went by. I did not get that, so I  
13 called again. I did finally get a Water Quality Report that was from 2004, and  
14 it was not a Water Quality Report, it was their interruption for a water quality  
15 report. The water analysis on the bottled water you buy in the grocery, has a  
16 better water analysis on it. But, that's just – I wanted to add those things.

17 As far as the billing, I know for a fact, there's no way they read that  
18 meter every month.

19 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have any  
20 questions of the witness?

21 [No Response]

22 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you very much  
23 sir.

24 [Applause]

25 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Does anyone else

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 [inaudible]..

2 Come up, please.

3 **WHEREUPON, Maimie Owens**, first being duly  
4 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

5 MS. BOYD: Would, you state your name and address  
6 for the record, please?

7 **TESTIMONY OF MS. OWENS:**

8 I'm Maimie Owens, 505 [inaudible] Street, Simpsonville. I live in the Village  
9 Subdivision. I've lived there for 27 years.

10 All my concerns have been answered, but I have no answer to the  
11 questions. My concern right now is how long will I have to wait for my answers for  
12 these concerns and what is the order that we should ask the questions to the  
13 utilities. I would like to have those answers now.

14 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If you would, after the  
15 meeting - ORS represents the public interest, and I would  
16 advise you to start with an ORS representative, and the  
17 Company representative will be here to offer any information  
18 to you also, Ms. Owens.

19 MS. OWENS: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, for  
21 being here.

22 [Applause]

23 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: [inaudible]

24 **WHEREUPON, Rodney Price**, first being duly  
25 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

MS. BOYD: Would you state your name and address  
for the record?

**TESTIMONY OF RODNEY PRICE:**

It's Rodney Price. I live in Trolleywood Subdivision. It's 328 Shadowmere Drive.

I just want to mention, we live across the street from one of the  
manholes. I don't want to go into the billing and the costs – my neighbors have, I think,  
done a good job with that. I only wanted to mention that at least four times since we've  
been there eight years, we've noticed that in the middle of the night, we get white  
powder across the street where my neighbor lives, and they have two small children.  
And, we have occasionally got cars in the middle of the night parked outside our  
house. One time we called United Utility, and they had mentioned that there was a  
sewage spill and that the powder was to help clean it up and help clean the  
ground, which was fine because they took care of it. It's just – it's a little  
unnerving to get woken up, like I said, at least four times since we've lived  
there – a car parked outside, in front of your house at 2:30 in the morning, 3  
o'clock in the morning. I'm not accusing them of anything. I'm not saying that,  
you know, that the sewage is bad or that the – I just, there's not really any  
explanation of why they come out at 2:30 in the morning, why they come in an  
unmarked car and not a company van, unless they're dispatched from their  
house or something like that.

The neighbor catty-corner to us, Mary Evelyn, she was visited probably  
about – I don't know, it was probably about 1 o'clock in the morning, and we had a  
Greenville County Sheriff friend spending the night with us, and he went over with us  
because we didn't know what was going on, and we try to look out for our neighbors.  
Supposedly, it was a service call from United Utility at 1 o'clock in the morning. Like I

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 said, I'm not accusing of anything; it's just there's some unanswered activity. I was told  
2 at one point that they come out and they spread the powder whenever our water goes  
3 off, but I just find it curious that it's always 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock in the morning, you  
4 know, whatever. I just thought I'd mention that part about the sewer to go along with  
5 the rate increase on the water.

6 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir. Let's see  
7 if we have any questions.

8 Do we have any questions of this witness?

9 [No Response]

10 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, sir, very  
11 much.

12 [Applause]

13 **WHEREUPON, Kathy [inaudible]**, first being duly  
14 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

15 MS. BOYD: If you would, please state your name and  
16 address for the record.

17 **TESTIMONY OF MS. [inaudible] :**

18 My name is Kathy [inaudible]. I live at 335 Shadowmere Drive, Pelzer, South  
19 Carolina. That is the Trolleywood Subdivision that you've heard a lot of tonight.

20 This meeting was very important to me because my youngest child is  
21 home sick right now, and I would not have left him for anything in the world.  
22 But, he's wanting me to leave, probably.

23 This – I have lived in my house for 27 years. Before that I lived in  
24 uptown Greenville for about the same number of years and by that, you know  
25 how old I am. So, I grew up on Greenville City water and now I have had the

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)



1 water that we have down at Trolleywood. We have battled this almost the  
2 entire time I have lived at Trolleywood. I live at the very end of the line. I do  
3 not get as much problems as the people in the middle of the line or at the first  
4 of the line. But, I will testify that there is a curve, a cul-de-sac. My sister, who  
5 cannot be here tonight; she is at the beach and could not change this week.  
6 But, she lives in this curve, and I'm testifying to you that I have seen her water  
7 over the years and when you hold it up, it is pure red. It has a sediment at the  
8 bottom. She has done everything she knows. Now, the [inaudible] to get rid of  
9 this problem, she has put filters, she has done everything.

10 The next thing I'm going to tell you may get a little emotional for me  
11 because she is one of three people in a row that has thyroid cancer; three people  
12 in a row that have [inaudible] thyroid cancer. My sister has had the cancer go to  
13 her lungs and now is being treated for lung cancer. The person next to her has  
14 thyroid cancer. The person next to her has three kinds of thyroid cancer.

15 Now, I wasn't going to speak tonight, but this just brings a real question  
16 into my mind of the quality of water – I can't think of anything else that we have in  
17 common with those three people that are in the curve. I can't think of anything else  
18 that's in common with those three people except the water. And, it causes me to really  
19 wonder what I am giving my children. In fact, I'm giving my children bottled water, or  
20 providing it for them.

21 I am, I would say, 20 years a school teacher, had to retire on disability.  
22 I am on a fixed income. I'm almost – [inaudible] to another subject, I'm almost  
23 being priced out of my home that I have lived in for 27 years, and I live within  
24 a stones-throw of the water – the Greenville County Water line. I could throw  
25 a stone and hit it. But, I can't really justify paying the amount to tie on when I

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 still have to pay about \$50 for the sewage. My bill last month – now, I don't  
2 remember exactly because I have it taken out of my account, but I'm thinking  
3 it hit over a \$100 for the 28 day period. My children have been on so many  
4 trips, camps, everything, this summer; they haven't been home. I don't cook  
5 when they're not home. So, I can't imagine how in the world it can go higher  
6 with my children not home than it is when they're home during the school  
7 year.

8 I wrote my notes on a little piece of paper, so excuse me if it's random.  
9 I would like to say that I would hate for one of you to go into my bathrooms  
10 because the calcium deposits are so thick where the line of water is in the  
11 toilet, I have literally got some kind of stone that you rub – I can't remember  
12 what it is, but it's supposed to take anything off; it did not take this off, and  
13 they are forever scarred because of that deposit.

14 I will say also, and I can testify to this, that my sister who lives right  
15 down the street – I live at one end of Shadowmere Drive; she's lives at the  
16 other end of Shadowmere Drive. She had a question come up about her  
17 water bill. They also started charging her a large amount. I can't say, I can't  
18 testify to what it was; I just remember it was big. We together put a rock on  
19 top of the water – the [inaudible] that they opened to find out how much that  
20 we're supposed to pay. It was there for several months. That rock never fell  
21 off. Also, now I can't testify to this. I did not see this, but I did hear about it  
22 from my sister, and I saw it later – that when they opened the water box, it's  
23 so full of mud and guck, goo – that you could tell that it had not been opened  
24 for months, maybe even years. So – and, I did see that.

25 The other thing I would like to point out is – I live near the dam, and I

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 don't know if any of you know where I'm talking about it, but, the little lake  
2 wherever our sewage goes. I know where it is. It's way over to the right of me when I  
3 stand in my backyard. I can smell sewage at certain times, raw sewage – I can smell  
4 it. I have called them about it. I did link one of the times, at the time that Mr. Price saw  
5 the trucks during the night come in and put – and, I have seen the white stuff around  
6 that manhole. We have no idea what it is. It's around the manhole, and it magically  
7 appears one day or one morning. So, I don't know what that is. Maybe y'all can  
8 answer that.

9 My concerns really are the cancer. The water is just unreal. I mean, we  
10 have fought this for all of my 27 years that I have been there, and I just – I feel like –  
11 I've almost given up because I just feel like we are not heard. We are not heard. We  
12 have come and asked this question over and over and over, and it just magically  
13 appears on our sewer and water bill at a higher price.

14 So, I hope you gentlemen tonight and ladies, sorry, ladies and  
15 gentlemen, will hear us and do something about this for us. Thank you.

16 [Applause]

17 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: [inaudible] Yes, ma'am.

18 **WHEREUPON, Ruth Wyatt**, first being duly  
19 sworn, assumes the stand and testifies as follows:

20 MS. BOYD: If you would, please state your name and  
21 address for the record.

22 **TESTIMONY OF MS. WYATT:**

23 I'm Ruth Wyatt. 217 Riverdale Drive, Trolleywood Subdivision. We've lived in  
24 Trolleywood since 1977.

25 We [inaudible], and the water quality has certainly been substandard.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 We've had orange clothes for years, and you do get tired of calling them. We  
2 deserve better for the price that we've been paying.

3 I need to add too about the sewer. I went to walk one afternoon and as  
4 I walked up the road, I said, that's not sewer – where's it coming from. And, in  
5 the street there was little white trickles of residue going into the street, about  
6 five different places out on the street. So, I said, well, there's something  
7 wrong; the pipes in the middle of the street have bursted or something. So, I  
8 thought, well, we had a good friend at DHEC, and I'll just call him and ask him  
9 to please come and see about it. So, I called the person that I thought was  
10 our friend and asked him if he'd please come out and see what happened.  
11 So, I don't whether he ever came or not, but anyway, apparently United Utility  
12 came out and patched different places because there's little gadgets in the  
13 street in different places where they [inaudible] – maybe prepared the line or  
14 something. But, as I was walking up the street, I thought, well, am I walking in  
15 this, and am I going to take this back into my home on my shoes.

16 And, we really do need some help from you folks. Thank you so much.

17 [Applause]

18 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Do we have questions?

19 [No Response]

20 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: Thank you, ma'am, very  
21 much.

22 Do we have anyone else?

23 [No Response]

24 CHAIRMAN HAMILTON: If not, we'd like to thank  
25 each for being here with us this evening. We've heard

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)

1 your concerns, and we assure you that they're a part of  
2 the record in the hearing tonight. And, I remind you one  
3 more time, if you have questions, as our attorney told you  
4 earlier, we aren't here – we can't by law answer your  
5 questions at this time, as we have to make a judgment on  
6 the final matter. But, we do have the Company  
7 representative and the office of ORS, who will be happy  
8 to talk to any of you this evening.

9 We thank you for coming

10 Okay, and the hearing in Columbia, the merits  
11 hearing, will be August the 28<sup>th</sup>, and on that date at 10:30  
12 a.m.? – 10:30 a.m.

13 Thank you very much.

14 The Hearing is closed.

15  
16  
17 [WHEREUPON], at approximately 8:15 P.M., the  
18 hearing was recessed, to be resumed in Columbia on  
19 August 28, 2006, at 10:30 a.m.]  
20  
21

22  
23 MaryJane Cooper, *Certified Court Reporter*  
24 Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
25 101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210  
26 P.O. Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211  
27 ☎ 803•896-5108  
28 [maryjane.cooper@psc.state.sc.us](mailto:maryjane.cooper@psc.state.sc.us)  
29

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

101 Executive Center Drive, Columbia SC 29210

Post Office Box 11649, Columbia SC 29211

[www.psc.state.sc.us](http://www.psc.state.sc.us)